

# JUDGES CHAPTER 8

## JUDGES FEATURED IN THIS CHAPTER

OTHNIEL

ABIMELECH

ELON

EHUD

TOLA

ABDON

SHAMGAR

JAIR

SAMSON

DEBORAH

JEPHTHAH

ELI

**GIDEON**

IBZAN

SAMUEL

## WHEN

- Most scholars place the period of the Judges between 1450 B.C. and 1000 B.C.
- The precise dates are still debated.
- Gideon appears in Israel's history approximately 40 years after Deborah and Barak (5:31).

## WHERE

- Gideon lived near Ophrah (not on the map), which was in the territory of Manasseh.
- Israel attacked Midian near the hill of Moreh which was just to the north of Mt. Gilboa (6:33; 7:1).
- The Midianites fled south to Abel-meholah after they were routed by Gideon's army.
- Gideon passed through the cities of Succoth and Penuel while pursuing the Midianite army.



## CHARACTERS

- **The Midianites** – They oppressed the Israelites for 7 years. The kings of Midian brought an army of 120,000 soldiers into the Promised Land.
- **Zebah and Zalmunna** – Kings of Midian.
- **Gideon** – The 5th judge of Israel. God used him to free Israel from the oppression of the Midianites. He was given the name “Jerubbaal” which means “Let Baal contend against him” (6:32).

## OUTLINE

- GIDEON CAPTURES THE KINGS OF MIDIAN, ZEBAH AND ZALMUNNA (8:1-21):
  - + After being routed by Gideon's 300 men in Judges 7, the kings of Midian fled south.
  - + Gideon's men pursued them all the way to the other side of the Jordan River.
  - + When they were exhausted from the chase, Gideon asked the men of Succoth for food.
  - + But the people of Succoth wouldn't give him any because they were afraid Midian might try to retaliate against them if they managed to escape Gideon.
  - + Gideon was furious and told the men of Succoth, "I will flail your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness."
  - + The same thing happened when Gideon asked the men of Penuel for food.
  - + Gideon promised to return to Penuel and tear down their tower.
  - + Gideon caught up with Midian at Karkor and defeated the 15,000 men that remained of their original 120,000 man army.
  - + Zebah and Zalmunna were captured.
  - + Gideon then returned to Succoth and Penuel and got his revenge on them for refusing to help him.
  - + When Succoth's elders had been taught their lesson and the tower of Penuel had been torn down, Gideon killed the kings of Midian.
- GIDEON'S EPHOD (8:22-28):
  - + The Israelites wanted to make Gideon their king, but Gideon refused.
  - + Instead, he asked his warriors to give him all the gold earrings they collected from the Midianites.
  - + Gideon received a total of 1,700 shekels of gold (shekel = 4 grams).
  - + He made an ephod from the gold and set it up in his home city.
  - + Unfortunately, people began worshipping the ephod and it even became a problem for Gideon and his family.
  - + The land had rest for 40 years after the Midianites were defeated.
- GIDEON'S LATER YEARS (8:29-35):
  - + Gideon married many women and had 70 sons.
  - + He died at "a good old age."
  - + As soon as he died, the Israelites went back to worshipping idols.

## APPLICATION

- The men of Succoth and Penuel refused to pick sides because they didn't know who was going to win in the end, Israel or Midian.
- We don't face the same dilemma.
- We already know who is going to win the spiritual battle around us.
- Jesus showed us with His resurrection that God will win in the end.
- Therefore, be quick to support those on God's side.
- Even when you aren't engaged in the same battle as them (maybe their ministry is different than yours), be quick to provide support however you can.
- Don't let God's people go without the things they need.

OTHN  
EHUD  
SHAN  
DEBO  
GIDEC  
ABIM  
TOLA  
JAIR  
JEPHT  
IBZAI  
ELON  
ABDC  
SAMS  
ELI  
SAMU